

VZCZCXRO5146
RR RUEHBC RUEHDA RUEHDH RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #1856/01 1901521
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 091521Z JUL 09 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3865
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 001856

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [EINV](#) [ETRD](#) [IZ](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: SECOND MEETING OF SERVICES AND INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY JOINT COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING

REF: A. BAGHDAD 00427
[1](#)B. BAGHDAD 00297
[1](#)C. BAGHDAD 00399

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (SBU) Deputy Prime Minister Rafi Al Eissawi and EMIN Marc Wall convened the second meeting of the Strategic Framework Agreement (SFA) Services and Information Technology Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) on July 6, 2009. Both sides highlighted the continued significance of the SFA as the foundation of a strong bilateral relationship and the positive impact the Services and Information Technology JCC is having on the lives of Iraqi citizens. Notably, Eissawi was adamant that the Iraqi co-chairs of the six implementation working groups (WGs) remain focused on identifying priorities, developing practical plans to achieve those priorities, supporting the USG,s efforts to build capacity within ministries and among professionals in various fields, and providing recommendations to overcome any challenges facing their WGs.

OVERVIEW: SFA STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

[1](#)2. (SBU) On July 6, 2009, EMIN Ambassador Marc Wall and Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) Rafi Al Eissawi hosted the second meeting of the Strategic Framework Agreement (SFA) Services and Information Technology Joint Coordination Committee (JCC). Iraqi media was present throughout. They received presentations from each of the six implementation working groups (WGs)) electricity and essential services; agriculture and water; transportation; health; environment; and communications and information technology) on their activities since the last JCC meeting on March 28.

[1](#)3. (SBU) In his opening remarks, Eissawi expressed appreciation for Wall,s strong support and enthusiasm for the Services and Information Technology JCC and welcomed Ambassador Patricia Haslach as the in-coming JCC co-chair. He noted that while the U.S. military is disengaging from Iraq, the USG and Government of Iraq (GoI) are focusing on &re-engagement on the strategic side8 through cooperation, coordination, and a strong relationship based on the SFA) a message that Vice President Joseph Biden reinforced on his recent visit to Iraq and that Prime Minister Nouri Al Maliki will emphasize during his upcoming trip to Washington. Eissawi underscored the importance of focusing on civilian efforts with the Iraqi ministries in light of the U.S. military withdrawal.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Wall stated that nothing symbolizes the U.S.-Iraqi relationship better than the SFA, which provides a solid foundation for all non-military efforts in Iraq. He added that activities under the SFA) and as a result of the Services and Information Technology JCC efforts in particular

) touch Iraqi lives directly. Wall noted that the Prime Minister will likely highlight these achievements during his upcoming Washington trip and that Iraqi business leaders will build upon these accomplishments when they visit the United States this fall. He emphasized the continued importance of creating an environment hospitable to private investment for developing a robust, diverse national economy.

15. (SBU) Before turning to Iraqi WG co-chairs for progress reports, Eissawi requested that each official: focus on priorities and plans to achieve priorities; identify challenges facing his or her group; and provide recommendations to address those challenges. He repeated this request several times throughout the meeting, making it clear that he wants to maintain the JCC's momentum, leverage U.S. assistance to develop ministerial capacity, and focus on U.S. assistance to develop ministerial capacity, and focus on future deliverables that can continue to impact positively the lives of Iraqi people.

ELECTRICITY AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES

16. (SBU) Reporting on the work of the Electricity and Essential Services WG, Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works Deputy Minister Ayad Ibrahim Alsafy highlighted the group's focus on developing technologies for clean water and electricity production, as well as obtaining new technologies to treat sewer water and waste. He characterized sewage treatment as catastrophic, noting that only 10 percent of the urban population has access to clean water and that there are no factories for recycling or solid waste management.

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U.S. co-chair Ms. Eva-Marie Wohn outlined the U.S. support to this WG, including establishing a legal and regulatory environment hospitable to private investment and developing an electricity master plan that looks out at both 3- and 10-year frames. Also, she noted the importance of passing and implementing the draft electricity law. On the topic of investments in electricity, DPM Eissawi recognized the current situation with General Electric and Siemens and said that the Government of Iraq is working these issues to get financing for these two projects.

HEALTH

17. (SBU) Deputy Minister of Health Dr. Issam Namiq Abdulla reported that the Health WG has focused attention on technical abilities, basic services, ambulatory care, and communications, including a number of programs at the workforce level in key areas. Issam mentioned quality assurance for training in hospital administration, financial administration, and nursing, and U.S. co-chair Dr. Lawrence J. Furman noted that Iraqis are receiving laboratory and epidemiological training in Iraq and clinic/hospital management training at two facilities in the United States. Furman said that developing centers of excellence in Iraq -- whether at existing or new facilities -- would help to attract Iraqi medical personnel, including those who have left the country, to Iraq. The WG will also focus on securing basic utilities and services that will enable facilities to operate on a sustained basis; for example, medical facilities should not rely on generators as their sole source of power. Eissawi thanked the WG co-chairs for identifying needs and asked them to develop a plan with practical steps to address those challenges.

ENVIRONMENT

18. (SBU) Deputy Minister of Environment Dr. Kamal H. Latif

emphasized the need for training, as well as improved laboratory testing and information-sharing, and stressed the importance of evaluating the current environmental situation (including infrastructure requirements), developing a national strategy with priorities and a plan, and drafting and implementing legislation. U.S. co-chair Ms. Ruth Hall reinforced these points by outlining agreed areas of cooperation: field sampling; strategic planning; laboratory analytical capabilities; commercial and environmental legislation, regulations and policies; and bilateral exchanges. She highlighted that 25 Iraqis received training in ground and surface water monitoring and that remote sensing water equipment is ready for transfer to the GOI. A bilateral work plan was agreed on June 23, 2009 with Environment Minister Narmin Othman.

TRANSPORTATION

¶9. (SBU) The Transportation Working Group is the only group of the JCC that has been unable to convene to date. The report on the Transportation WG,s activities, as provided by Advisor to the Transportation Minister Mr. Ismat Amr Jieyad, focused on a range of issues, including drinking water, power generation, and a duty-free area within Baghdad International Airport. Eissawi expressed concern that these projects were going on prior to the SFA. He noted that during his recent trip to Washington, he met with the U.S. Secretary of Transportation and understood that the U.S. Government is ready to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to support transportation projects. U.S. co-chair Mr. David Decarme noted that they should receive a copy of the MOU soon and that the WG could use it as a framework for specific projects. He also noted that transportation projects are Qprojects. He also noted that transportation projects are particularly capital-intensive; creating an inviting climate for private investment is key. Again, Eissawi asked that the WG present recent accomplishment, identify challenges, and provide recommendations at the next JCC meeting.

AGRICULTURE AND WATER

¶10. (SBU) The Agriculture and Water WG co-chair,s top priority is improving capabilities as Iraqi farmers are &very much behind8, particularly in many highly technical methods and inputs. While the United States has reduced many burdens, he would like an easing of the Test of English as a Foreign Language requirement, asking for a broad program of

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